



NOME LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE

PO Box 1506
Nome, AK 99762
907.443.8521

Senator Donny Olson
Senator Loki Tobin
Representative Neal Foster
State Emergency Response Commission
Local Emergency Planning Committee Association

February 12, 2024

Honorable Madams and Sirs,

The purpose of this correspondence is to emphasize the need for funding the Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPC) especially in Smaller communities.

As a general rule LEPC's in smaller communities have no funding and are run by volunteers, yet the LEPC's have enormous responsibilities. The LEPC's are expected to complete the following:

- 1: Notify all local organizations that have Hazardous Materials within reporting thresholds to complete Tier II reporting as required by the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know act (EPCRA) also known as Title III of the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (1)
- 2: Write and review Emergency Operation Plans for Hazardous materials incidents, review all Emergency Operations Plans of all hazard incidents for all organizations within the jurisdiction.
- 3: Write and review the Hazard Mitigation Plan(s) for the local jurisdiction(s).

- 4: Write the Emergency Evacuation Plan(s) for the local jurisdiction.
- 5: Write and exercise Table Top Exercises within the local Jurisdiction.
- 6: Write and exercise Full Scale Exercises within the Jurisdiction
- 7: Have a minimum of four meeting annually.
- 8: Encourage training for Incident Command Systems for all responders and community leadership.
- 9: Encourage training for all managers and responders in the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

Incidents include:

- Terrorism both Domestic and International
- War Related Disasters
- Hazardous Material Events
- Nuclear Accidents
- Aircraft Accidents
- Wildland and Urban Fires
- Floods
- Earthquakes
- Hurricanes
- Tornadoes
- Typhoons
- Fall Sea Storms
- Search and Rescue events

All of this in the smaller communities is expected to be done by volunteers.

In larger communities and boroughs with the State of Alaska there are paid departments that are paid employees, while the funding helped I don't think it was critical to have for their ability to operate.

Please note that LEPC's are not operational organization but planning organizations. This can be overlooked as a lot of LEPC members have Roles in the Emergency Operations Center or as responders with representing their various organizations but that is not the same as planning. In the biannual meeting of the Local Emergency Planning Committee Association (LEPCA) as the LEPC's round table briefing about what the LEPC's have been doing a common theme is that since funding has ceased

from DHS-EM in fiscal year 2020 is that the LEPC's have been rebuilding, or trying to get more members in attendance.

In closing I think funding the LEPC's is critical to the citizens of the State of Alaska, I would recommend that a Legislative appropriation be considered.

Thank you

Thomas Vaden
Nome LEPC Chair



Paul Kosto
Nome LEPC Vice Chair



(1) Congress passed the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA), also known as Title III of the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA), in 1986. EPCRA establishes requirements for businesses and for federal, state, and local governments regarding emergency planning and community right-to-know (CRTK) reporting for hazardous chemicals. The CRTK provision in EPCRA helped increase awareness about the presence of chemicals in their communities and releases of these chemicals into the environment. The Alaska State Legislature also enacted CRTK laws consistent with federal law. As a result, Alaskan communities, working with industry, are better able to protect public health and the environment. Alaska Congress enacted EPCRA regulations to benefit communities. Two main goals of this law are to: • Provide a basis for each community to develop and tailor a chemical emergency planning and response program to suit the community's needs, and • Provide the public with a right-to-know attitude to identify, quantify, locate, and determine the physical and chemical properties of hazardous substances in the community.